

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: XGDS-3

TAGS: MILI, CA

SUBJECT:DOD REPORT ON PAST US BIOLOGICAL WARFARE (BW)
PROGRAMS

1. THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE WILL RELEASE TO THE CONGRESS
A REPORT CONCERNING THE HISTORY OF THE US BW PROGRAM. THE
CLASSIFIED VERSION WILL BE DELIVERED ON THURSDAY, MARCH 3,
AND THE UNCLASSIFIED SUMMARY WILL BE RELEASED TO THE
CONGRESS AFTER TUESDAY, MARCH 8, SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH A DOD
PRESS CONFERENCE.

2. THE UNCLASSIFIED VERSION MENTIONS THAT DURING WORLD WAR
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II A PROGRAM OF COOPERATION WITH CANADA INVOLVING THE
EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AND PERSONNEL WAS INAUGURATED, AND
THAT A JOINT AMERICAN-CANADIAN TEAM UNDERTOOK TO DEVELOP
DEFENSES AGAINST RINDERPEST DISEASE OF CATTLE. THIS
PARTICULAR INFORMATION WAS ALREADY RELEASED BY THE WAR
DEPARTMENT PRESS BRANCH ON JANUARY 3, 1946. HOWEVER,
THE RELEASE OF THE DOD REPORT MAY RAISE PRESS QUERIES ABOUT

THE STATUS OF SUBSEQUENT PROGRAMS.

3. THE CLASSIFIED REPORT STATES THAT A FIELD TEST WAS CONDUCTED FROM JAN. TO MARCH 1966 IN "THE GREAT PLAINS REGION OF CENTRAL CANADA" TO EVALUATE THE AREA COVERAGE CAPABILITIES OF A DRY AGENT DISSEMINATION SYSTEM DURING COLD WEATHER. THE AGENT USED WAS BACILLUS GLOBIGII, WHICH IS HARMLESS TO MEN AND ANIMALS. THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT APPROVED AND OBSERVED THE TEST. AN EARLIER TEST WAS CONDUCTED IN OCTOBER 1963 AT RALSTON, ALBERTA, CANADA, USING THE SAME AGENT TO TEST AIR DISSEMINATION AT NEAR SONIC VELOCITY. NO OTHER TESTS USING LIVE AGENTS WERE CONDUCTED BY THE US IN CANADA. THE REPORT ALSO MENTIONS THAT AGENTS WERE SHIPPED TO CANADA DURING THE 1950'S.

4. WE ARE INFORMING THE CANADIAN EMBASSY HERE OF THE REPORT, AND WILL SHOW THEM THE CLASSIFIED PORTIONS PERTINENT TO THEM.

5. THE FOLLOWING IS THE CONTINGENCY PRESS GUIDANCE FOR USE BY THE DEPARTMENT PRESS SPOKESMEN. BEGIN FYI. BEGIN TEXT...QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE DETAILS OF THE ARMY'S BW PROGRAMS, SUCH AS TESTING IN US CITIES, HUMAN EXPERIMENTS, ETC., SHOULD BE REFERRED TO THE DOD PRESS SPOKESMAN. HOWEVER, THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS MAY BE RESPONDED TO SHOULD THEY ARISE.

QUESTION: THE DOD REPORT STATES THAT IN AUGUST 1962, THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY SUGGESTED OPEN-AIR TESTING OF BW
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AGENTS. SECRETARY VANCE WAS THEN SECRETARY OF THE ARMY. DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENT AS TO WHY HE SUPPORTED SUCH TESTS?

ANSWER: IN RECOMMENDING SUCH TESTING, SECRETARY VANCE STATED, "IT IS NOT POSSIBLE, BASED ON YEARS OF RESEARCH, TO ANSWER THE CRUCIAL QUESTION CONCERNING THE ABILITY OF BIOLOGICAL AEROSOLS TO REMAIN EFFECTIVE AFTER LONG EXPOSURE IN THE OPEN ATMOSPHERE WITHOUT CONDUCTING LARGE-SCALE TESTS." IN ORDER TO BETTER UNDERSTAND THE FEASIBILITY OF BIOLOGICAL WARFARE AND THE POSSIBLE EFFECTIVENESS OF AN ENEMY BW ATTACK AND OUR DEFENSE CAPABILITIES, WE NEEDED TO CONDUCT THESE TESTS. IT SHOULD BE BORNE IN MIND THAT THE US BW PROGRAM OF PAST YEARS WAS THE PRODUCT OF A DIFFERENT ERA IN WHICH WE WERE CONCERNED THAT POTENTIAL ADVERSARIES MIGHT BE DEVELOPING BW CAPABILITIES AT A TIME IN WHICH WE KNEW VERY LITTLE ABOUT THE POTENTIAL OF BW. OUR POLICIES AND LAWS ARE QUITE DIFFERENT NOW. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT SECRETARY VANCE ALSO RECOMMENDED

AN ACTIVE PUBLIC AFFAIRS PROGRAM TO INFORM THE PUBLIC OF THE RATIONALE FOR SUCH TESTING.

QUESTION: WHAT IS PRESENT US BW POLICY?

ANSWER: IN 1969, THEN-PRESIDENT NIXON UNILATERALLY RENOUNCED ALL USES OF BW BY THE US AND ORDERED OUR BW STOCKS DESTROYED. SUBSEQUENTLY, WE CARRIED OUT THAT DESTRUCTION AND NEGOTIATED AND SIGNED THE BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION WHICH PROHIBITS THE DEVELOPMENT, PRODUCTION, STOCK-PILING AND ACQUISITION OF BIOLOGICAL AGENTS OR TOXINS "OF TYPES AND IN QUANTITIES THAT HAVE NO JUSTIFICATION FOR PROPHYLATIC, PROTECTIVE OR OTHER PEACEFUL USE" AS WELL AS WEAPONS AND MEANS OF DELIVERY. THE UNITED STATES RATIFIED THIS CONVENTION IN JANUARY 1975, AND IT CAME INTO FORCE IN MARCH 1975.

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QUESTION: DOES THE US PRESENTLY RETAIN ANY BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS?

ANSWER: NO.

QUESTION: (IF ASKED) DOES THE US TODAY HAVE A BW PROGRAM?

ANSWER: NOT IN THAT SENSE OF THE TERM. ALL THE US HAS IS A SMALL RESEARCH PROGRAM DEVOTED ENTIRELY TO WARNING AND PROTECTIVE MEASURES. (REFER TO DOD SPOKESMAN FOR FURTHER DETAILS.)

QUESTION: (ONLY IF ASKED) DID THE US HAVE A COOPERATIVE BW PROGRAM WITH THE UK AND CANADA?

ANSWER: YES, DATING BACK TO THE MID 1940'S.

QUESTION: (ONLY IF ASKED) WERE TESTS EVER CONDUCTED OUTSIDE THE US?

ANSWER: YES, I UNDERSTAND THESE TESTS WERE CONDUCTED OFF THE COASTS OF VIRGINIA, CALIFORNIA AND HAWAII TO DETERMINE THE DISPERSION OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIALS. (REFER PRESS TO DOD FOR DETAILS.)

QUESTION: (ONLY IF ASKED) WHAT ARE THESE "BIOLOGICAL SIMULANTS"?

ANSWER: THE SIMULANT IS "BG"--BACILLUS GLOBIGII, WHICH IS HARMLESS TO MAN. THE SURGEON GENERAL OF THE US PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE HAS INDICATED THAT THERE IS NOT EVIDENCE

OF INFECTION IN MAN OR ANIMALS FOLLOWING EXPOSURE TO BG,
EVEN IN MASSIVE DOSES. (REFER PRESS TO DOD SPOKESMAN
FOR FURTHER DETAILS.)

QUESTION: (ONLY IF ASKED) WERE HUMAN VOLUNTEERS USED?

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ANSWER: YES. HUMAN VOLUNTEERS WERE USED, AS FAR BACK AS
1954. THEY WERE VOLUNTEERS. THEY WERE EMPLOYED TO
DEVELOP VACCINES, JUST AS HUMAN VOLUNTEERS ARE STILL
NEEDED FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH. MANY OF THE RESULTS WERE
PUBLISHED IN PUBLIC SCHOLARLY AND MEDICAL JOURNALS. (RE-
FER PRESS TO DOD SPOKESMAN FOR FURTHER DETAILS.)

QUESTION: (ONLY IF ASKED) WHAT ABOUT NON-VOLUNTEERS?

ANSWER: ONLY INFORMED VOLUNTEERS WERE USED FOR TESTS
INVOLVING HAZARDOUS BIOLOGICAL AGENTS. THERE WERE NO
TESTS USING HARMFUL AGENTS ON NON-VOLUNTEERS. (REFER TO
DOD FOR DETAILS.) END TEXT. END FYI.

6. DOD DOES NOT YET HAVE FULL CONTINGENCY PRESS GUIDANCE.
HOWEVER, THE DOD PRESS SPOKESMAN WILL OPERATE ACCORDING
TO THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES: A) ALL PRESS QUERIES MUST
BE REFERRED TO WASHINGTON FOR REPLY. NONE WILL BE
ANSWERED IN THE FIELD. B) ALL QUESTIONS DEALING WITH
TESTING OUTSIDE THE CONTINENTAL UNITED STATES WILL BE
ANSWERED BY QUOTE NO COMMENT UNQUOTE. C) ALL ANSWERS TO
QUESTIONS PERTAINING TO FOREIGN RELATIONS WILL BE CLEARED
WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE PRIOR TO RELEASE. D)
QUESTIONS RELATING TO CLASSIFIED INFORMATION WILL BE
ANSWERED WITH THE COMMENT THAT CLASSIFIED INFORMATION
CANNOT BE RELEASED.

7. THIS MESSAGE IS SENT TO YOU FOR INFORMATION ONLY.
SHOULD CANADIAN CONNECTIONS BECOME PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE,
YOU SHOULD REFER ANY QUERIES TO WASHINGTON FOR RESPONSE.

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